

**Milbourne**

**Christopher's  
Own Version**

**FOR  
STRETCHING  
A ROPE**

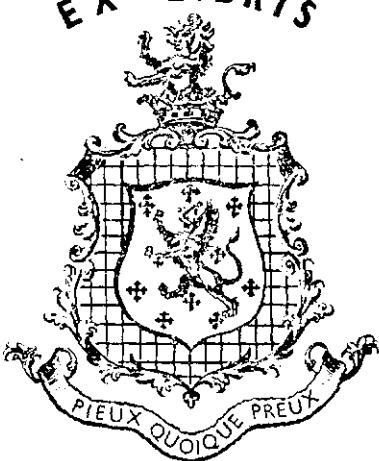
**3 to 20  
Foot Rope Stretch**

*Completely Revised and Greatly Enlarged Instructions for BOTH of his Exclusive Methods of Stretching A Rope to Many Times its ORIGINAL Length.*

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# STRETCHING A ROPE

BY

MILBOURNE CHRISTOPHER



ILLUSTRATIONS BY BILL HANNA



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# MILBOURNE CHRISTOPHER'S OWN VERSION for STRETCHING A ROPE

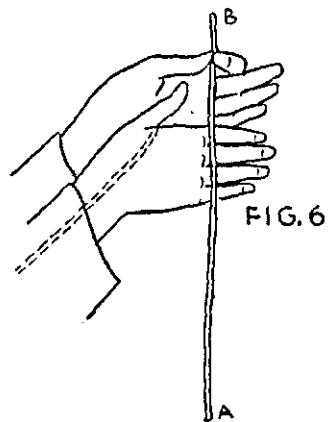
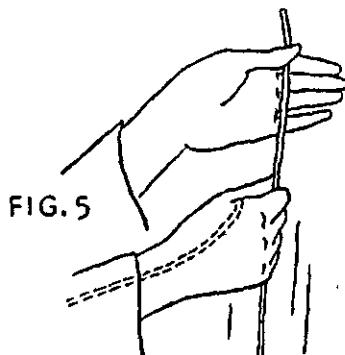
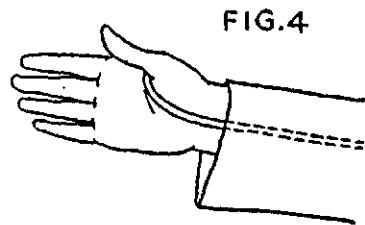
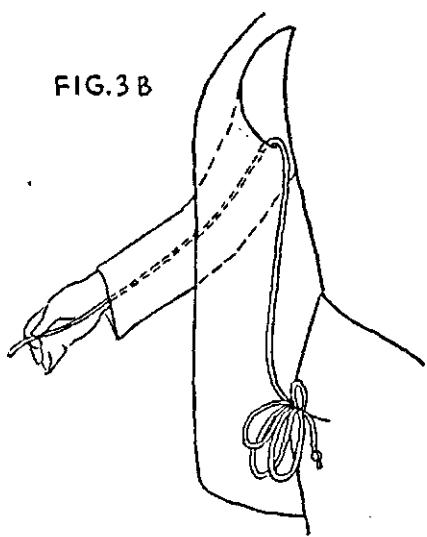
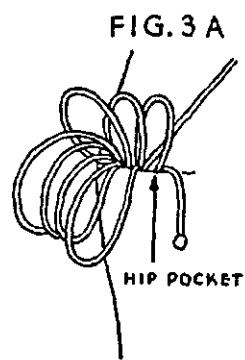
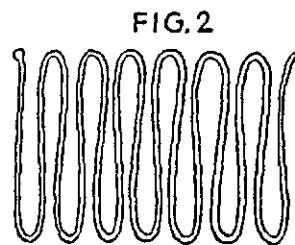
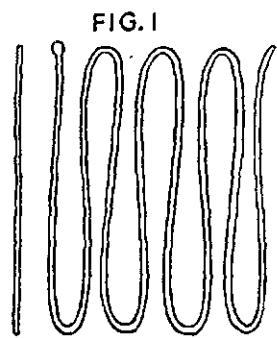


The forces of magic are made very visible when three feet of rope are s.t.r.e.t.t.c...h...e.....d into TWENTY-THREE in full view of your audience. At no time is any part of the rope concealed beyond the natural width of the hand holding it. After a certain point has been reached, the rope may be held between thumbs and first finger tips of both hands, all other fingers being spread wide apart, while hands are exhibited freely palm and back. On concluding the effect, rope may be thrown out for examination.

Instructions that follow give full details of the one and only complete routine invented, perfected and popularized by that master of finished presentations, Mr. Milbourne Christopher. The facsimile of his signature herewith is your guarantee that you are getting Mr. Christopher's genuine official approval as published herewith.

Two methods will be presented, the "Philadelphia" and the simplified "Lancaster." In our opinion, the former is to be much preferred over the latter. However, in line with our fixed policy to give our patrons the most complete information available, the second method is given not only for the sake of completeness, but also for those who like to "do things differently."

Rope used for either method should be of soft braided cotton, the type usually recommended for other cut-and-restored effects. Since it is either imported or made only on special order in this country, you will save time by going directly to your magic dealer for it.



## STRETCHING A ROPE

Illustrations, by Bill Hanna, give you close-ups of what Milbourne Christopher's hands look like while doing this trick. Also, a number of the pictures give the spectators' viewpoint.

### *Philadelphia Method*

You start with two pieces of rope, prepared and disposed of as follows: A short piece, about 3 feet in length, has its ends trimmed free of ravel. If you wish, these ends may be served or bound with white cotton thread. The second piece of rope is 20 feet long. One end is neatly trimmed or bound with thread, as above; in the other end you tie a single, tight knot. Make this knot as near the end as possible, cutting away all but what is needed to keep the knot from coming undone. Fig. 1 shows these two pieces and indicates their relative lengths.

Fig. 2 shows how the long piece is folded or pleated between 8 inch centers. Note carefully that the rope is NOT coiled, but is arranged in a zig-zag manner—the reason for which will be clear in just a moment.

Fig. 3 A is how you arrange the long piece of rope in your right hip pocket. Note that the bundle is put in so that the knotted end is left outside of the pocket. This is so that the rope will feed out freely later on.

The other end of the rope is carried up under your coat, as in Fig. 3 B, into the right armhole and down that sleeve to just inside the cuff. A rubber band around the wrist will keep the end within easy reach until wanted.

Fig. 4 gives the simple, but secure, manner in which the free end of the long rope is held in the right thumb crotch—until time for the switch move of Fig. 9. The only caution about this hold is that the end does not stick out where it may be seen.

Fig. 5 is what the spectators see as you start the trick. ~~Stand~~ with your right side turned towards them. Keep the right elbow well in towards the body, especially if any people are on a line or in back of you.

AUDIENCE VIEW

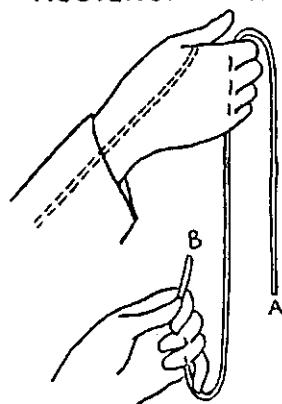


FIG. 8

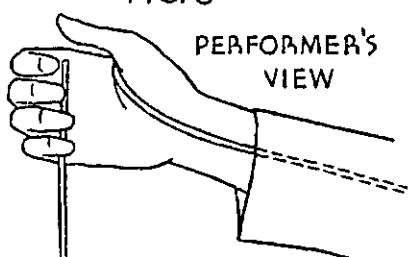


FIG.9

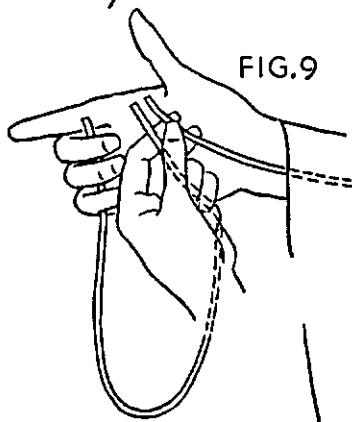


FIG.10

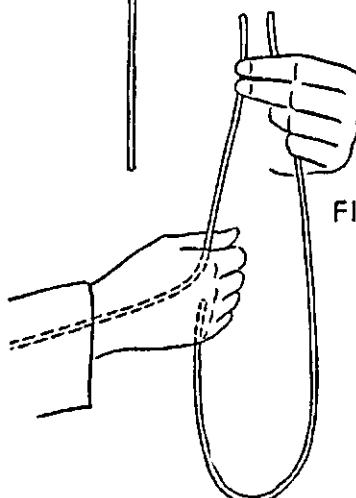


FIG.11

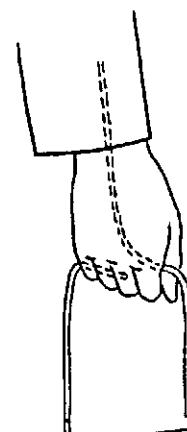


FIG.12

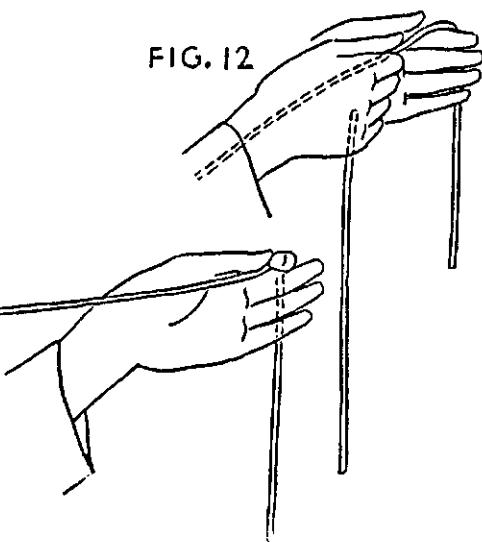
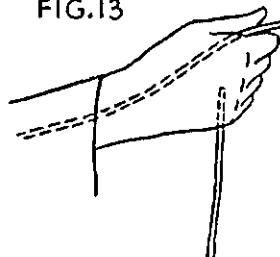


FIG.13



## STRETCHING A ROPE

With the left hand holding the short piece of rope by thumb and forefinger, palm fully exposed, stroke the rope from top to bottom several times with the right hand. The left hand remains absolutely still. It has nothing to conceal. On the other hand, the natural stroking motions of the right hand imply that it, too, is quite innocent.

While the above preliminaries are taking place, you might be pattering along the lines of needing a piece of rope longer than the one in your hands. And that you'll have to see what can be done about it.

Be sure that the stroking motions do not pull the rope thru the left hand. About 2 inches should extend from the top. Then, as in—

Fig. 6 the right hand, fingers extended and close together as shown, passes *behind* the rope until the latter is at the base of the left fingers. Left hand should be held high so that right hand is about on level with chin. Now the left hand passes down in *back* of right hand, drawing the rope over the right forefinger.

Fig. 7 shows above move under way. This is the start of one of the most subtle switches in all magic. As soon as the left hand clears the right, the fingers of the right hand close around the rope—but only enough to just about feel its motion. All of this time the right hand keeps perfectly still.

Fig. 8 is your view of the end of the above move—the end of the rope is just within the right hand. Note that this end is now next to the end coming from your sleeve. By bringing up the left hand, with the end that it holds, you are one step ahead of—

Fig. 9 which shows the left hand masked by the right hand. Note that the left hand should have its rope quite close to the end—between finger and thumb.

As soon as masking is complete, finger and thumb of left hand, still holding end of short piece as above, pick up the end of the *long* piece coming from sleeve. Continuing the motion smoothly, both rope ends are carried upwards into full view—the rope from sleeve running

## STRETCHING A ROPE

out freely thru crotch of right thumb about 8 inches; piece in left hand hanging free. Meanwhile, the other end of the short piece is held by right fingers.

Fig. 10 is how the short piece will form a loop as it falls free from your right hand. After releasing the short piece, the right thumb closes on the rope from the sleeve—as indicated.

Note the two ends extending from the left thumb and fingers. These are dropped free—as the left hand sinks to your side.

Fig. 11 shows how your right hand will look when it, too, falls to rest at your right side. Your pose is that of entire relaxation, a pause before going further.

Note that the outside view of the right hand, Fig. 11, gives the appearance of holding the short piece only. Dotted lines show true conditions. Keep inside of wrist well hidden from spectators.

The pause is ended by raising your left hand, palm outwards, to eye level. This concentrates attention while you bring up the right hand to about waist level or even chest high. Right hand places piece of rope from sleeve in left fingers as per—

Fig. 12 where both thumbs are shown extended and touching each other. Note that the left hand grips rope between thumb and *second* joint of forefinger. Now, *holding left hand perfectly still*, draw the clenched right hand *along* the rope—towards right shoulder Fig. 13. THIS IS IMPORTANT! Actually, you pull rope from your sleeve. However, the optical effect on the spectators is that the rope really does stretch!

During the above “stretching” move and those that follow, stand facing the audience. Be sure that right hand and wrist are turned so as to thoroughly mask the rope coming from your sleeve.

Now bend over so that hands are at about knee level—and placed thumb to thumb, with backs of both hands facing audience. Repeat “stretch” move, the new angle from which the spectators see it, heightens the illusion.

## STRETCHING A ROPE

Drop rope from left hand and straighten up for another "stretch" in the upright position, always starting from hand position Fig. 14. Alternate upright and bending-over positions until you feel knot in end of long piece come into your right hand. The number of times you can work this move will depend on the length of your arms and how much "extension" you want each time.

Fig. 15 A shows what to do when you feel the knot. Hold both hands above the head and about two feet apart. Fig. 15 B shows the method of holding the ends of the two pieces of rope in the right hand. Note that this position shows both hands and wrists clearly from all sides. As coat sleeve naturally falls away from your wrist, this is taken as absolute proof that extra rope could not possibly have come from this source. Hence, it *must* have stretched!

Meanwhile, thumb and forefinger of right hand cover joint of short piece and knotted end of long piece—the latter being now entirely out of your sleeve. Hold this joint secure during further moves.

Drop both hands to the sides, as this is a good time to gather a bit of applause. If pressed for time, the effect may be discontinued at this point. Suggestions for an inspection "throw-out" are given below. However, there's still a lot of "stretch" in the old rope yet!

The right hand still holds the joint between long and short pieces as in Fig. 15 B. The manner in which security is obtained is shown more clearly than it can be described. Holding the rope in the right hand, pick up the extended long piece in the left and get into a loose coil on the floor in front of the left foot.

Now, keeping the right hand absolutely still at arm's length and shoulder high, give the spectators a chance to see that everything is fair and square. Then reach across your body to the left so that left hand can grasp the rope about waist high. And here comes the *real* optical illusion, one of the finest effects in all rope work!

As the right hand draws the rope *thru* the left fist, the latter is extended towards the floor. Naturally, you have to bend over quite a bit to make this move. Notice carefully that no rope is drawn up from the coil on the floor. The illusion is heightened by moving the

FIG.14

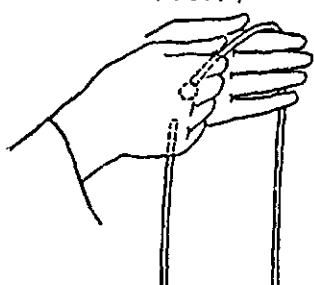


FIG.15A

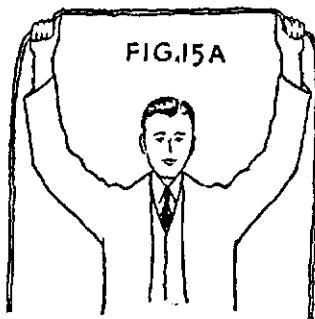


FIG.15B

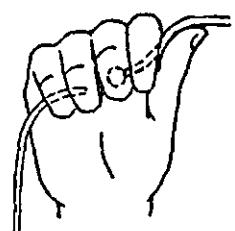


FIG.16

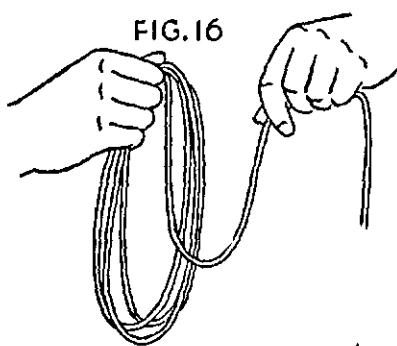
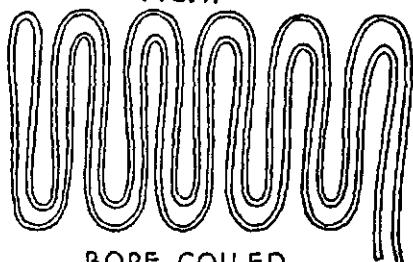


FIG.17



## STRETCHING A ROPE

left hand to the left—say a couple of feet. The right hand approaches the floor in a manner similar to the left. However, when both hands are at knee level, drop rope from left hand and reach over taking a new hold (thumb to thumb, with backs of both hands facing audience.) Do a “stretch” of about 2 feet again in this stooped-over position—but this time let the rope slide thru the *left* hand. Return to upright position as you do this. The resultant disturbance of the rope coiled on the floor will give the appearance of more rope being added, tho of course, quite the opposite is taking place!

All during the above moves, the short piece of rope has been hanging free from the little-finger side of your right hand, sharing no part in the “stretching” operations.

When you have finally reached a climax, straighten up with rope in right hand. With the left, loop up coils from the floor into the right hand—as per Fig. 16. Conclude by looping up the short piece also. If no inspection is to be offered, get rid of rope by placing on a side table, stowing it away in your bag, etc.

However, if other rope tricks are to follow, bring a pair of scissors from your pocket and go thru the motions of cutting the required length from the coil in your hand. If so desired, this cutting may be done instead of the coiling suggested above. In any event you “cut” at the joint between long and short pieces. An extra snip or two “to even the ends” will get rid of the knot on the end of the long piece.

### *Lancaster Method*

The general effect of this method might be described as a novice version of the “Philadelphia” method. To a lay audience it appears to start the same—with an unprepared piece of rope about 3 feet long. However, any spectator with the least bit of sophistication will immediately note that you are not very free in exhibiting the “oneness” of your rope. Also, practical limitations are such that the amount of “stretch” is not much more than 1/3 of that obtained by the “Philadelphia” routine.

There is one rather special situation where use of this method might come in handy—where for one reason or another you wish to

## STRETCHING A ROPE

repeat. Perform this method first. When you follow up with the "Philadelphia," somebody is sure to want to see the rope before you start. Let 'em!

Lancaster being a smaller town than Philadelphia, you start with less rope. In fact, you use only one piece—and that is only 10 feet long.

Fig. 17 shows how your rope is first doubled and then folded in pleats to fit the inside breast pocket of your coat.

Fig. 18 indicates how the two free ends are run thru armhole and sleeve to your right fist. It may be that you can do a better job of packing if you run the doubled center of the rope *up* your sleeve first—and do the pleating afterwards.

Fig. 19 is what the spectators see—apparently one continuous piece of rope running thru your right fist. Dotted lines show the true condition of affairs. Each extending end should be about 10 inches long.

If this trick is not the one you start with, you will have to find some cover for fishing the rope out of your sleeve without attracting attention to what's going on. In the "Philadelphia" method, just a turn towards where your short piece is parked is sufficient to get the sleeved end under control.

Fig. 20 starts the "stretch" by the left hand raising the part of the rope coming from that side of the right fist. Both hands should be moved pretty well to the left so as to cover up where the rope comes from as much as possible. With the left hand held stationary, move the right hand to the right. This draws out a portion of one side of the looped rope from the sleeve. DO NOT get the right hand out too far—especially if anyone is back of you, or even well down on the sides.

Stretch move is repeated as above until all of the rope is out. It will help somewhat to divert attention from the right hand if the eyes are kept on the left.

At the conclusion of the effect, the rope may be thrown out for inspection immediately. This is the only way in which this method has anything on the "Philadelphia."

## STRETCHING A ROPE

### *General Suggestions*

Both methods will be greatly improved by making each motion with great deliberation. There is nothing requiring speed for a cover-up and the spectators will be deceived to greatest extent by letting their eyes see—and believe!

Angles are very important while any rope is still in the sleeve. This caution cannot be too carefully heeded. With an audience entirely in front of you (as when working on a stage) the right arm and wrist may be moved more freely than otherwise. A bit of practice moving the right arm while the rope is still in the sleeve will soon give you confidence. The arm can move in front of the body with considerable freedom; to the side, with a more limited amount. However, should you ever have to work entirely surrounded—remember Milbourne Christopher has done this trick hundreds of times on crowded nite club floors. In such a spot the rule is to keep the inside of the right wrist fairly close to your body at all times.

*When doing either of these effects, remember that as you pull on your rope—Milbourne Christopher is “pulling” for you, too. And may they “stretch” your reputation no end!*

**Finis**

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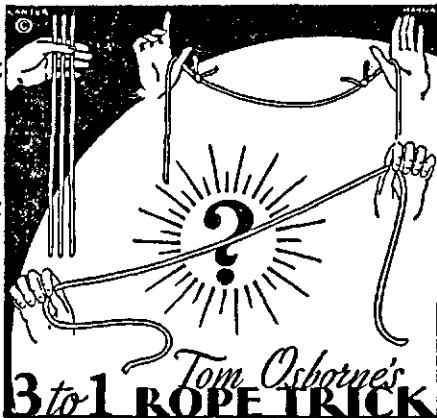
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